



## THE PHYSICIAN'S *Bookshelf*

**THALASSEMIA—A Survey of Some Aspects**—Robin M. Bannerman, M.A., D.M., M.R.C.P., Lecturer in Medicine, The Nuffield Department of Clinical Medicine, The Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, England. (Modern Medical Monographs—23—Editor in Chief: Irving S. Wright, M.D., Consulting Editor: Richard H. Orr, M.D.). Grune & Stratton, 381 Park Avenue South, New York 16, N. Y., 1962. 138 pages, \$6.50.

This monograph lays no claim to providing a complete or compendious review of thalassemia, the syndrome of defective erythropoiesis originally named because of its prevalence in certain regions in or bordering the Mediterranean Sea, but now recognized as having much wider distribution. However, highlights of the historical aspects, genetics and population dynamics, clinical and hematological features, the interactions of thalassemia with other normal and pathological hemoglobin types, the heterogeneous mutants capable of giving rise to different varieties of thalassemia, and possible pathogenetic mechanisms are integrated in a concise and provocative manner. Normal and abnormal heme and hemoglobin synthesis are reviewed together with known facts of iron and hemoglobin metabolism in thalassemia. The bibliography of 375 references is valuable and is well chosen. The index is not as complete as it might be but is reasonably adequate. As mentioned in the preface to the volume, thalassemia presents puzzles of interest to many different disciplines. While perhaps not sufficiently detailed to satisfy the biochemist, geneticist, epidemiologist, geographer, or historian individually, this small volume brings together important aspects of these facets of the problem along with clinical and hematological features, and will be a welcome addition to the library of the hematologist, pediatrician, internist, or generalist.

WILLIAM N. VALENTINE, M.D.

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**FUNDAMENTAL APPROACH TO SURGICAL PROBLEMS**—Lester F. Williams, Jr., M.D., and Garnet F. Wynne, Jr., M.D. With an Introductory Chapter by Warner F. Bowers, M.S., M.D., Ph.D., Colonel, MC, USA (Retired). Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 301-327 East Lawrence Avenue, Springfield, Ill., 1962. 216 pages, \$7.75.

This book entitled *Fundamental Approach to Surgical Problems* was conceived and dedicated "To those men who must know why and are not satisfied with only knowing how, etc." With noble purpose in mind, the author has attempted to gather together in a short digestible book, the basic information and physiological background of surgery. Unfortunately, the book falls far short of its purpose, for it is too simple in concept, too narrow in scope, and too meager in basic information.

The subject matter covers such topics as "wound healing," "body response to trauma," "hemorrhage," "surgical infections," "fluid and electrolyte balance," "preoperative evaluation," and "postoperative care." The information presented is thoughtful, clearly expressed and well organized, but it is far too superficial and simple in its exposition.

In attempting to avoid the fallacy of using "big words to cover lack of basic comprehension" and "the necessity to be humble in our continuing quest for wisdom," the enlightened surgical reader is not rewarded with the depth of comprehension and understanding required in the majority of surgical problems.

Some sections of the book are quite good, but in general it is a book for beginning medical students and nurses, not for interns, house officers, general practitioners, or specialists in surgery.

VICTOR RICHARDS, M.D.

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**CARCINOMA OF THE CERVIX**—John B. Graham, M.D., Chief Gynecologist, Roswell Park Memorial Institute, and Associate Professor of Gynecology, University of Buffalo Medical School; Luciano S. J. Sotto, M.D., Consultant in Gynecology, Philippine General Hospital, and Instructor in Gynecology, University of the Philippines College of Medicine; and Frank P. Paloucek, M.D., Attending Gynecologist, Roswell Park Memorial Institute, and Instructor in Gynecology, University of Buffalo Medical School. W. B. Saunders Company, West Washington Square, Philadelphia 5, Pa., 1962. 487 pages, \$14.00.

This monograph is devoted exclusively to the subject of carcinoma of the cervix uteri, and, in the words of the author it is "a selective collection of accumulated information of the past tempered by personal experience." Its authoritative status is attested by the fact that the senior writer has contributed to many valuable studies of the subject which have emanated from Boston and Buffalo.

The book begins with an accumulation of data relating to the frequency of this disease and its etiology, and a somewhat cursory discussion of its pathology. Carcinoma in situ and "other borderline lesions" are given attention in one chapter. The authors do not believe that "anaplasia" is frequently followed by malignancy and "can be safely observed."

Prognosis is given a great deal of attention, although only a few pages are devoted to cytologic prognosis. This is disappointing in view of Graham's contributions to the subject. Clinical staging is taken up at great length and covers over thirty pages.

Treatment in its various aspects is considered in over two hundred pages, approximately half the volume. Both radiotherapy and surgical treatment are given in detail, and there is adequate discussion of the complications which may ensue from either of these procedures. The place of treatment by radiation and that by surgical measures is ably evaluated. The authors have no axe to grind and present a sound basis for their application.

This book is recommended for gynecologists and radiologists who treat carcinoma of the cervix. It is a fine volume well up to the standards one expects from the publisher. There are numerous illustrations which are excellently reproduced. The total of 152 tables attest to the vast amount of factual data which has been collected on every phase of the subject.